THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b). Does not arise.

*[Translation]*

**Duty Free Import of Newsprint**

4896 SHRI MAHENDRA KUMAR SINGH THAKUR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to allow duty-free import of newsprint inspite of its availability in adequate quantity with the paper mils in the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the extent to which it is likely to affect our foreign exchange reserves?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c). Indigenous production of newsprint is not adequate to meet the domistic requirements. In view of this, import of newsprint is allowed to fill in the gap between demand and supply. In order to ensure adequate supply at reasonable rates, its import has been exempted from payment of coustoms duty and the indigenous production exempted from excise duty.

*[English]*

**Abolition of Posts**

4897. SHRI AJOY MUKHOPADHYAY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether circulars have been issued to the offices under different Ministries for abolition of posts at various levels; and

(b) if so, the details of the scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SHANTARAM POTDUKHE): (a) and (b). Ministries/Departments of the Governmei of India have been asked to conduct a review and Secretariat as well as in the field formations including the autonomous bodies etc. under their control that could be considered for surrender/abolition.

*[Translation]*

**Tea Production**

4898 SHRI JAGMIT SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMECE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India is the largest producer of tea in the world;

(b) whether the tea production is increasing continuously in the country;

(c) if so, the increase in tea production during 1991-92 in comparison to the production in Ist year;

(d) the target fixed for tea production during 1992-93;

(e) whether the Government have prepared any scheme to provide special facilities for encouraging tea industry to achieve the target; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir.

(c) the production of tea in India during April, 1991-January, 1992 is estimated at 696.49 Million kgs. as against 677.49 M.Kgs. during the same period last year.

(d) 765 Million kgs (Provisional)

(e) and (f). The Tea Board has already been operating various developmental schemes for increasing tea production. These schemes provide for long term loan, subsidy and grants-in-aid for the purpose of new planting, replanting, rejuvenation and infilling, creation of irrigation facilities, procurement of processing machineries, etc.

**Support Price to cotton Growers**

4899. SHRI SURYA NARAYAN YADAV:
SHRI VILASRAO NAGNATHRAO GUNDEWAR:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the average support prices paid by the Cotton Corporation of India of the various varieties of cotton during 1990-91 and 1991-92 and prices fixed for 1992-93 season;

(b) whether the support prices of cotton varies from State to State; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT): (a) The Cotton Corporation of India procures cotton at the minimum support prices fixed by Government when the market prices of *kapas* fall below the MSP fixed by Government. Since the market prices of *kapas* were ruling above the support prices during 1990-91 and 1991-92 cotton seasons the CCI did not effect any purchases under price support operations in those years. Government has not yet fixed the MSP for cotton for 1992-93 cotton season.

(b) and (c). The support price of cotton varies from variety to variety, depending upon the spinnability of the variety.

[*English*]

**Farming of Remunerative Products by Tobacco Growers**

4901. SHRI G.M. C. BALAYOG: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of worlwide campaign to discourage cigarette smoking, the Government propose to encourage farming of other remunerative products to help farmers growing tobacco; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED): (a) No, sir.

(b). Inspite of anti-smoking campaigns, the demand for tobacco is continuing and is likely to continue for some more years.

[*Translation*]

**Production of Silk**

4902. SHRI V. KRISHNA RAO;
SHRI K.H.MUNIYAPPA:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state;

(a) whether the Government have any plan to provide better quality of silk eggs to the farmers of Karnataka to boost the production of silk; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT): (a) and (b). In Order to provide quality silkworm eggs to the farmers of Karnataka, the Central Silk Board has taken up the follwoing programmes in the State:-